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# Lok Adalat's Contribution in Shaping the Indian Legal System

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## ABSTRACT

*India being the country with the largest constitution, provides its residents' plethora of rights and duties in order to secure their wellbeing, ensure justice, equality, and a platform to seek redressal for their grievances. The country consists of the apex court, whose judgments are the final word and have shaped India's legal system. It is followed by the high courts and district courts. The ratio of dispute resolution in the country is very low. Thus Lok Adalats come into the picture. They are a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution where the suits filed or the already pending cases in the court of law are resolved, or the matter is settled. People opt for Lok Adalats to escape the labyrinth of the court of law or are underprivileged. Lok Adalats intend to lessen the burden of the Indian courts and thus help to shape the legal system of the country.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The name itself is self-explanatory, as it translates to Peoples' Court, hence Lok Adalat. The responsibility to conduct these redressal mechanisms reside with NALSA and its subsidiary legal service institutions in every state, known as the State Legal Service Authority. The Legal Service Authorities Act, 1987, was enacted as a statute dedicated solely to provide legal services to people in need. This Act also ensures that financial stability shall not be a ground to seek justice or any other legal help, as it is not only the rich who is entitled to receive an upper hand when it comes to righteousness. Thus, the Act mentioned has provisions for the weaker sections of the society, which include the underprivileged, women, children, bonded laborers, specially-abled people, and others to empower their voices and help them receive what is rightfully theirs. The Act also provides the LSAs the complete authority to have the last word in any dispute. Its decision is binding and final in nature. The parties involved shall adhere to the decision and cannot approach for further appeals, and have to agree with the award provided. This is done only to fast-track the court proceedings and resolve disputes, but in case the parties are not satisfied with the decision, they can always knock on the doors of

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the court of law and litigate further by appropriate means and procedures since litigation provides the parties their immunity to appeal further.

## **II. NEED FOR LOK ADALAT**

The ratio for judges: cases filed is severely low in India and is a major hindrance to the fast and efficient dispute resolution by the courts. The number of case files has been piling up for a very long time; see no end to it in the near future. The accumulation of cases is getting unmanageable by every passing day, and the judicial system cannot comprehend it.

Unmanageable accumulation of cases, mounting arrears, and extreme deferral in the removal of cases in courts at all levels-least to the most elevated combined with high costs have without a doubt pulled in consideration of not just the individuals from the Bar, shoppers of justice (defendants), social dissident, legal scholastics and parliament yet additionally chiefs of the court. So colossal is the arrears of cases that, except if they are disposed of on a war balance, the system may disintegrate down in a couple of years' time. Apparently, the justice system, as in vogue in this nation, is about to breakdown. In this way, it is nevertheless regular that the alarming situation of the Indian legal executive has stood out of anybody worried about law reforms. The sole consideration, consequently, is the means by which to decrease the deferral in the removal of cases, make the system tough by eliminating its definition, making the system less formal and really modest in order to bring justice inside the range of poor people. To be perfectly honest conceding, the current legal system has remained sadly outsiders having no living contact with masses and isn't at all significant to them. The amazing development in the arrears of cases has constrained the individuals from the Law Commission of India to think about the recovery of the indigenous legal system and prescribed it's rebuilding to give another model or instrument for dissolving questions on the standards of justice.<sup>2</sup>

## **III. CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE LEGAL SYSTEM**

Practically 80% population of this country goes under the title of the free legal aid Scheme. Various Authorities and Committees are established under this Act from Lok Adalats to Apex Court. To begin with, it gave statutory authority to LAs. It permitted the states to constitute LAs as they deemed fit. It likewise gave LAs the jurisdiction to: Determine to compromise or settlement between the parties to a question in the regard of (I) any pending case; or (ii) any issue which is falling inside the jurisdiction of, and isn't brought under the steady gaze of, any court for which the Lok Adalat is sorted out. Second, it allowed pending cases in the proper

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<sup>2</sup> Law Commission of India: One Hundred and Fourteenth Report on Gram Nayayalaya 1986, page 7

courts to be moved to LAs by direct use of one of the two players. On the off chance that conciliation was not accomplished, then the case could move back to the proper court from which it came. Any awards given were kept at par with the decrees of a common court. and at last, it made LA's awards enforceable.<sup>3</sup>

In 2002, there was an amendment to the Legal Services Authority Act that specifically influences LAs. This amendment set up permanent LAs for explicit sorts of disputes. For instance, LAs were set up to determine disputes concerning public utility services. This is significant progress in light of the fact that, beforehand, if two parties couldn't go to a goal, they would return to the conventional justice system. This was viewed as a delay in the allotment of justice and was utilized to that end by numerous lawyers. Be that as it may, with perpetual LAs, judges have the authority to settle on choices dependent on the benefits, just as to force conciliation. Today, in spite of the fact that systems of LAs fluctuate by the district in India, there are many overall similarities. Most LAs occur during the ends of the week, typically a Saturday, in a government building. The panels are regularly led by a High Court or District Court judge from that jurisdiction. The Legal Services Authority Act necessitates that legal panels have, in any event, three individuals. Adherence to these standards, in any case, changes. Present-day LAs can be followed back to the appearance of NPs in old India. Notwithstanding, as the justice system and the country have advanced, LAs have become a totally different instrument of justice than the first NPS.<sup>4</sup>

#### **IV. LOK ADALAT IN COVID ERA**

The Indian Legal System faced an abrupt pause when the pandemic hit the country, paralyzing the judicial system and refraining it from serving justice to its residents, but the authorities acted up and ensured that justice is still served by making a few changes and introducing technology in the picture.

The Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority (RSLSA), under the aegis of the National Legal Services Authority, organized the state's first online Lok Adalat and settled pre-litigation cases.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice N.V.Ramana stressed that during such occasions, the function of Legal Aid Institutions has become even more significant NALSA is incessantly endeavoring to guarantee justice is open in such phenomenal occasions. He further said that Legal Services Authorities, with the aid of the National Legal Aid Helpline and State Legal Aid Helpline, successfully

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<sup>3</sup> Tameem Zainulbhai ,Fordham International Law Journal. Article 3

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Anju Helen Bara, Justice for All: Improving the Lok Adalat System in India; Fordham International Law Journal Volume 35, Issue 1 2016 Article 3

gave legal guidance and helped with 6,26,369 cases. Online Lok Adalats are being composed by Legal Services Authorities. His lordship likewise included that innovation has played a basic part in this change and the Legal Services Authority have been attempting to stay aware of the changing occasions by utilizing innovation as its most grounded aide and expressed that various online courses have been directed by the Legal Services Authorities on various legal themes so as to upgrade the Knowledge of the majority, basic for improving admittance to justice.<sup>5</sup>

## **V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

The thought-provoking conditions appealing in the Indian culture require an extraordinarily honed lawful organization that is practical for needy individuals and the oppressed. The Lok Adalat system is not any more an examination in the country.<sup>6</sup>The prerequisite for Lok Adalats is bothered by the gigantic populace of India that makes an unmanageable load on the Judiciary structure. To grow the capability of the course of action of Lok Adalats, it is basic for individuals, as a rule, the legal advisors, the authority, and the Judiciary to work in friendliness and coordination. Everybody should be made aware of the potential gains of the Lok Adalats. The key test that lies in the method of the achievement of the Judiciary is the contribution of the dominant part. In the current condition, the count on Lok Adalats has engaged neighbourly inquiry settlement. The accomplishment of Lok Adalats should, without a doubt, be estimated in the country, not by the number and nature of Lok Adalat held, cases settled, or remuneration.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup><https://www.indialegallive.com/top-news-of-the-day/top-story/first-e-lok-adalat-a-huge-success/last> visited on 23 09 2020

<sup>6</sup> Lok Adalats- Academike. <https://www.lawctopus.com/academike/lok-adalats/>

<sup>7</sup> M.P. Paridhi Selvan, Dhinesh, A Study on Lok Adalats in Indian Legal System